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ABSTRACT

The present study extends a previous study of student teachers' teaching potential to first-year teachers and includes variables addressing commitment to a teaching career and efficacy. Respondents consisted of 126 first-year teachers who completed questionnaires at student teaching, graduation, and one year following graduation. Seven tables are included in the document. Table 1 and 2 define all variables used in the analysis and correlate potential, commitment and efficacy. Tables 3-7 examine correlations between potential, commitment, and efficacy and: performance at student teaching and as a first year teacher; satisfaction at graduation and as a first year teacher; academic indicators; variables related to preparation; and career orientation variables. The results suggest that for first year teachers commitment to teaching as a professional career and efficacy appear to be highly related to confidence in abilities, as well as to satisfaction. (LL)

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Examination of the Relationships Between Perceived Teaching Potential, Commitment, and Efficacy and Performance, Satisfaction, Preparation, Career Orientation, and Academic Ability

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Examination of the Relationships Between Perceived Teaching Potential, Commitment, and Efficacy and Performance, Satisfaction, Preparation, Career Orientation, and Academic Ability

Attracting and retaining highly qualified and effective teachers is critical to the quality of education in the United States. The high rate of attrition following preparation, the decline in teacher satisfaction and status, and the high rate of attrition during the early years following entrance into teaching seriously challenge the profession. Of particular concern is the attrition that occurs during the early years following preparation. There are data indicating that as many as half of the teacher education graduates do not enter teaching the year following graduation (Feistritzer, 1984), and that half have left the profession after five years (Mark & Anderson, 1978; Schlechty & Vance, 1981).

Projected teacher shortages (Darling-Hammond, 1984; Feistritzer, 1984; National Governor's Association, 1986) and a growing body of literature on the lower academic ability levels of teachers and teacher education students (Schlechty & Vance, 1981; Feistritzer, 1983; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Roberson, Keith, & Page, 1983; Tusin, 1991) have resulted in the need for increased understanding about the factors that influence teacher commitment to the profession.

In recent years, success as a teacher has been examined from many viewpoints. Educational reformers have often asserted that academic achievement is a predictor of potential teaching success. However, contradictory research results have been reported. Nelson and Wood (1985), Martens (1987), and Shipley (1982) found that academic indicators, such as SAT scores and grade point averages, were not related to pre-entry and post-entry college screening tests designed to predict probable success or to student teaching competence. Dobry, Murphy, and Schmidt (1985) found that while overall grade point average was related to a standardized test of professional knowledge, neither was related to teacher competence. However, Villeme and Hall (1981) reported that higher ability teacher education graduates (as measured by grade point average) were teaching, wanted to continue teaching, and had positive attitudes related to teaching as a career, and Ayers (1989) suggested that the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST) may be predictive of selected general classroom teaching behaviors.

Other factors also have been shown to be related to success. Nelson and Wood (1985) reported that performance in coursework (particularly methods) can reliably predict success. Preparation, including the student teaching experience, appears to have a predictable impact on effective attributes of prospective teachers (Pigge & Marso, 1989). Finally, personality type influenced student teaching performance (Pfeifer, 1983; Schmidt, 1989; McCutcheon, Schmidt, & Bolden, 1991), while self-concept and educational attitudes (Noad, 1979) have been shown to be related to student teaching success.

Another key area addresses relationships among teacher satisfaction, commitment, and efficacy. Factors related to teacher satisfaction include efficacy, the sense of satisfaction with one's performance as a teacher and confidence in one's ability to help children learn (Trentham, Silvern, & Brogdon, 1985; Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Brissie, Hoover-Dempsey, & Bassler, 1988); positive relationships with colleagues, a

sense of collaboration and community among the faculty, and recognition from other teachers (Rutter & Jacobson, 1986; Chapman, 1983; Bogenschild, Lauritzen, & Metze, 1988); leadership style of principals (Kagan, 1989; Pitner & Charters, 1988); and administrative support (Bogenschild, Lauritzen, & Metze, 1988; Adams & Bailey, 1989; Brissie, Hoover-Dempsey, & Bassler, 1988). Conversely, dissatisfiers for teachers include a sense of isolation in the classroom (Chapman, 1983; Lortie, 1975); inhibiting working conditions in the schools (Cresap, McCormick, & Paget, 1984; Lortie, 1975); and heavy paperwork loads and other duties that are not directly a part of the teaching process (McLaughlin, Pheifer, Swanson-Owens, & Yee, 1986).

Other factors related to commitment (and therefore retention in the profession) include the ability and opportunity to help students learn (Hounshell & Griffin, 1989) or help and serve others (National Education Association, 1982) and the prestige and status associated with teaching (Hounshell & Griffin, 1989; Bogenschild, Lauritzen, & Metze, 1988; and Friesen, Prokop, & Sarras, 1988).

In a recent study (Kemis, Warren, & Dilts, 1990), ratings of teaching potential by three groups, student teachers, university supervisors, and cooperating teachers, were significantly related to characteristics and attitudes reported by teacher education students during student teaching and at graduation. The findings of this study were generally consistent with the literature addressing potential as a teacher, particularly when examining personality and preparation factors. The three groups seemed to agree that the quality of preparation, especially performance as a student teacher and classroom preparation in pedagogy, confidence in abilities, and academic ability were key elements in judging potential.

The present study extends this 1990 examination of potential to first-year teachers and includes additional variables addressing commitment to teaching as a professional career and efficacy. The purpose of this research is to examine relationships between potential, commitment, and efficacy and selected variables, including teaching performance, satisfaction with teaching, adequacy of preparation, career orientation, and academic ability. The following research questions were examined:

1. To what extent are ratings of teaching potential, commitment, and efficacy interrelated?
2. To what extent are ratings of teaching potential, commitment, and efficacy related to performance in the classroom?
3. To what extent are ratings of teaching potential, commitment, and efficacy related to satisfaction?
4. To what extent are ratings of teaching potential, commitment, and efficacy related to teacher preparation?
5. To what extent are ratings of teaching potential, commitment, and efficacy related to academic ability?
6. To what extent are ratings of teaching potential, commitment, and efficacy related to career orientation?

Methodology

Data for the study were taken from the longitudinal follow-up study of teacher education graduates at a major midwestern university. In the longitudinal study, graduates are surveyed as they enter the teacher education program, as they student teach, as they graduate, and one year, five years, and ten years after graduation. The data for

this study were collected from graduates of Spring 1988 through Spring 1989 who completed questionnaires at student teaching, graduation, and one year following graduation. All variables used in the analysis are defined in Table 1.

The sample consisted of 126 first-year teachers. Seventy-nine percent were females and 68 percent were licensed to teach at the elementary level. Most (90%) had planned to teach following graduation. Over 85 percent had plans to be teaching after five years; an additional 11 percent planned to be employed in an education-related position.

Results and Discussion

The results of the analysis indicated that several significant relationships existed among the variables. Potential for success as a teacher (measured at student teaching and at graduation), commitment to teaching as a career (measured one year following graduation), and efficacy (also measured one year following graduation) were intercorrelated (Table 2). Multiple ratings of potential were significantly correlated, with ratings by university supervisors and cooperating teachers having the highest correlation (r=.67). The self-rating of potential at graduation was also positively correlated to the multiple ratings of potential, but it was not related to commitment or efficacy. Ratings of potential by the university supervisors were positively related to commitment in terms of the level of satisfaction graduates expressed about teaching as a career based on their student teaching experiences and how first-year teachers view teaching as a satisfying career. The cooperating teachers' ratings of potential were highly related to teaching career satisfaction. While student teacher ratings of potential were related to all other ratings of potential, these ratings were not significantly related to commitment or efficacy. The importance of teaching was related to teaching career satisfaction, teaching as a satisfying career, and that I make a difference as a teacher.

Performance in the classroom was related to potential, commitment, and efficacy (Table 3). Both of the self-ratings of potential were related to 5 of the 6 measures of performance during student teaching and as a first-year teacher. Higher ratings of potential by student teachers appeared to be related to a higher level of performance during student teaching, although a similar relationship between ratings by the other two raters at student teaching was not as strong. Positive relationships between commitment and performance (as both a student teacher and as a first year teacher) and efficacy and performance were also found. Teaching as a satisfying career, that teachers make a difference, and that I make a difference were related to all six performance variables, while teaching career satisfaction and the importance of being a teacher were related to 5 of the 6 performance variables.

Several significant relationships between satisfaction and the three key concepts were evident (Table 4). In general, satisfaction with the student teaching experience and satisfaction with level of first-year job performance were correlated to potential. Commitment was positively correlated to (a) satisfaction with student teaching, (b) several aspects of first-year job satisfaction, including satisfaction with the particular teaching position held, the community, performance evaluation, performance as a first-year teacher, the support received by family and friends for choice of career, and the amount of time spent working, (c) satisfaction with teaching as a career and overall job satisfaction, and (d) whether they would prepare to be teachers again.

TABLE 1
Variables Used in the Analysis

Concept/Variable	Operational Definition
Potential as a teacher	
1. Potential	The average rating of potential for 2 student teaching experiences by multiple raters--student teacher, cooperating teacher, university supervisor (rated at student teaching). Coded 1=not ready to teach to 5=will be outstanding teacher.
2. Self-rating of potential	Coded 1=I feel I would be an inadequate teacher to 5=I feel I would be an excellent teacher (rated at graduation).
Commitment to the profession	
3. Teaching career satisfaction	Based on the student teaching experience, the reaction to teaching as a career (rated at graduation). Coded 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied.
4. Teaching as a satisfying career	Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=other careers definitely more satisfying to 10=teaching definitely more satisfying (rated at one year follow-up).
5. Importance of being a teacher	Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=not at all important to 10=extremely important (rated at one-year follow-up).
Efficacy	
6. Teachers make a difference	Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=makes no difference to 10=makes a major difference (rated at one-year follow-up).
7. I make a difference	Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=makes no difference to10=makes a major difference (rated at one-year follow-up).
Performance	
8. Learning environment performance	A 7-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of self-ratings of performance in providing a setting conducive to learning, motivating students, communicating effectively with students, exhibiting a positive self concept, maintaining high expectations for student achievement, incorporating effective questioning techniques, and maintaining high standards for student behavior. Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=very low performance to 10=very high performance. The average alpha reliabilities were .87 (graduation) and .81 (one year follow-up).
9. Teaching behavior performance	A 6-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of self-ratings of performance in demonstrating knowledge of subject matter, monitoring/evaluating student progress and understanding, providing clear, concise explanations and examples, demonstrating effective planning and organization skills, using evaluation activities appropriately, and implementing lesson plans effectively. Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=very low performance to 10=very high performance. The average alpha reliabilities were .81 (graduation) and .83 (one year follow-up).
10. Managing instructional activities	A single item rating classroom performance in managing instructional activities and ensuring student time on task. Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=very low performance to 10=very high performance, at both graduation and at one year follow-up.
Satisfaction	
11. Satisfaction with student teaching	Three single items related to satisfaction with location of student teaching assignment, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor (rated at graduation). Coded 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied.

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TABLE 1 (continued)

Concept/Variable	Operational Definition
12. Satisfaction with job	An 8-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of satisfaction as a first-year teacher with salary, general working conditions, job benefits, amount of administrative support received, extent of involvement in decision making, opportunities for advancement, job responsibilities, and extent to which job challenged and provided professional growth. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied. The average alpha reliability was .78.
13. Satisfaction with community	A 4-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of satisfaction as a first-year teacher with level of parental involvement, community support for education, relationship with students, and size of community in which employed. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied. The average alpha reliability was .59.
14. Satisfaction with evaluation	A 2-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of satisfaction as a first-year teacher with method of job evaluation and frequency of job evaluation. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied. The average alpha reliability was .88.
15. Satisfaction with first-year teaching position	Six single items related to satisfaction as a first-year teacher with relationships with other teachers, level of job performance, support from friends and family for choice of career, amount of time spent working, role played in professional associations, and teaching as a career. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied.
16. Overall job satisfaction	Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=very low satisfaction to 10=very high satisfaction.
17. Prepare to be a teacher again	Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=certainly would not to 5=certainly would, at both graduation and at one-year follow-up.
Academic Ability	
18. Grade point average at graduation	Codes ranged from 2.13 to 3.99. The mean GPA at graduation was 3.17 (s.d.=.42).
19. Grade point average at admission to the teacher education program	Codes ranged from 2.09 to 3.97. The mean GPA at admission was 2.97 (s.d.=.50).
20. High school rank	Coded 1=highest ranking in the class to 100=lowest ranking in the class.
21. ACT score	Codes ranged from 13 to 30. The mean ACT score was 22.11 (s.d.=4.37).
Adequacy of Preparation	
22. Planning and delivering instruction	A 12-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of one-year follow-up ratings of adequacy of preparation in relating activities to interests and abilities, locating and using materials, evaluating own instruction, individualizing instruction, selecting and organizing materials, using a variety of instructional techniques, planning instructional units and lessons, using community resources, techniques of curriculum construction, maintaining student interest, content area preparation, and assessing and implementing innovations. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very inadequate to 5=very adequate. The average alpha reliability was .88.
23. Interpersonal relationships and individual differences	A 7-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of one-year follow-up ratings of adequacy of preparation in appreciating differences in values and lifestyles, skill in working with other teachers, skill in working with parents, consultation skills in interacting with other professionals, understanding teachers' roles in relation to administrators, supervisors, and counselors, influence of laws and policies related to schools, and professional ethics and legal obligations. Measured

TABLE 1 (continued)

Concept/Variable	Operational Definition
	on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very inadequate to 5=very adequate. The average alpha reliability was .78.
24. Assessing and dealing with learning problems	A 4-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of one-year follow-up ratings of adequacy of preparation in referring students for special assistance, skill in mainstreaming handicapped students, dealing with children with learning problems, and assessing learning problems. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very inadequate to 5=very adequate. The average alpha reliability was .82.
25. Testing and evaluating students	A 3-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of one-year follow-up ratings of adequacy of preparation in developing tests, using standardized tests, and evaluating student work. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very inadequate to 5=very adequate. The average alpha reliability was .66.
26. Developing a teaching style	A 6-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of one-year follow-up ratings of adequacy of preparation in classroom management, teaching basic skills, developing student-student relationships, psychology of learning, using written communication, and developing your own teaching style by observing others. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very inadequate to 5=very adequate. The average alpha reliability was .67.
27. Program quality	Measured on an 11-interval scale, ranging from 0=very poor quality to 10=very high quality, at both graduation and at one-year follow-up.
Career Orientation	
28. Challenge/leadership	A 6-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of challenge, responsibility, variety in the work, opportunity to exercise leadership skills, adventure, and control over what others do. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very unimportant that it is provided in my job to 5=very important that it is provided in my job (at graduation) and 1=never provided in current job to 5=always provided in current job (at one year following graduation). The average alpha reliability was .81.
29. Extrinsic rewards	A 5-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of opportunity to earn a good deal of money, opportunity for advancement, social status and prestige, opportunity for a relatively stable and secure future, and fringe benefits. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very unimportant that it is provided in my job to 5=very important that it is provided in my job (at graduation) and 1=never provided in current job to 5=always provided in current job (at one year following graduation). The average alpha reliability was .74.
30. Empowerment	A 4-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of opportunity to be creative and original, opportunity to use special abilities or aptitudes, control over what I do, and relative freedom from supervision from others. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very unimportant that it is provided in my job to 5=always provided in current job (at one year following graduation). The average alpha reliability was .79.
31. Humanity/service	A 3-item, factorly and conceptually derived measure consisting of opportunity to help and serve others, opportunity to effect social change, and opportunity to work with people rather than things. Measured on a 5-interval scale, ranging from 1=very unimportant that it is provided in my job to 5=very important that it is provided in my job (at graduation) and 1=never provided in current job to 5=always provided in current job (at one year following graduation). The average alpha reliability was .64.

TABLE 2
Correlations of Potential, Commitment, and Efficacy

	Ratings of Potential by:								
	Student Teacher	Cooperating Teacher	University Supervisor	Self Rating of Potential	Teaching Career Satisfaction	Teaching as a Satisfying Career	Importance of Teaching	Teachers Make a Difference	I Make a Difference
Potential -- Student Teacher	1.00								
Potential -- Cooperating Teacher	.45**	1.00							
Potential -- University Supervisor	.31**	.67**	1.00						
Self-Rating of Potential	.40**	.28**	.27**	1.00					
Teaching Career Satisfaction	.13	.26**	.19*	.12	1.00				
Teaching as a Satisfying Career	.18	.15	.20*	.17	.38**	1.00			
Importance of Teaching	.17	.19	.16	.07	.36**	.66**	1.00		
Teachers Make a Difference	.13	-.00	-.08	.08	.17	.09	.12	1.00	
I Make a Difference	.17	.12	-.03	.09	.14	.09	.23*	.52**	1.00

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

TABLE 3

Correlations of Potential, Commitment, and Efficacy With Performance at Student Teaching and as a First Year Teacher

	Learning Environment Performance -- Graduation	Teaching Behavior Performance -- Graduation	Managing Instructional Activities -- Graduation	Learning Environment Performance -- First Year	Teaching Behavior Performance -- First Year	Managing Instructional Activities -- First Year
Potential -- Student Teacher	.24**	.27**	.27**	.22*	.37**	.16
Potential -- Cooperating Teacher	.25**	.16	.18*	.09	.13	-.05
Potential -- University Supervisor	.20*	.21*	.11	.01	.02	-.05
Self-Rating of Potential	.45**	.45**	.38**	.17*	.15	.20*
Teaching Career Satisfaction	.30**	.20*	.19*	.34**	.18*	.14
Teaching as a Satisfying Career	.38**	.23*	.25**	.37**	.24*	.22*
Importance of Teaching	.42**	.23*	.17	.50**	.43**	.43**
Teachers Make a Difference	.36**	.33**	.33**	.28**	.25*	.28**
I Make a Difference	.47**	.31**	.36**	.42**	.44**	.34**

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

There also were significant relationships between efficacy and the satisfaction variables (Table 4). Feelings that teachers, in general, make a difference was positively correlated with satisfaction with community support, the amount of time spent working, and teaching as a career, and negatively correlated with wanting to prepare to be a teacher again. Feelings that an individual teacher can make a difference was related to satisfaction with teaching as a career, amount of time spent working, support from family for career choice, and community support, as well as to overall first-year job satisfaction.

The relationships of potential, commitment, and efficacy to academic ability were not clearly evident. As shown in Table 5, indicators of academic ability were related to potential. In particular, high college grade point averages were correlated with high ratings of potential, and the university supervisor's rating of potential, as well as the self-rating of potential, were positively related to high school rank. However, the direction of the relationship between potential and ACT scores was not consistent. Commitment and efficacy tended to be negatively correlated with ACT scores, with grade point average at time of admission to the teacher education program negatively related to one aspect of commitment--teaching career satisfaction. In general, the other indicators of academic ability, grade point averages and high school rank, were not significantly related to commitment and efficacy during the first year of teaching.

Variables associated with teacher preparation were also examined. Potential was somewhat related to ratings of adequacy of preparation after one year of teaching (Table 6). It was not generally related to the overall quality of the program, although ratings of potential by university supervisors were positively related to ratings of program quality at one year following graduation. Self-ratings of potential were negatively related to preparation in interpersonal relationships, working with special needs students, and testing and evaluating students. Commitment was related to adequate preparation in classroom activities, such as planning and delivering lessons, working with special needs students, and developing a style of teaching, and to the quality of the program. That teachers in general can make a difference was related to developing a teaching style and the quality of the program, while no significant relationship existed between individual teachers making a difference and adequate preparation.

Career orientation was examined at two points in time, at graduation and at one year following graduation. Self-rating of potential was positively related to all four job expectation composites at graduation, but not to whether job expectations were met in the first-year teaching position (Table 7). Cooperating teachers and university supervisors tended to give higher ratings of potential to student teachers with job expectations of challenge and leadership, empowerment, and providing service to others. A positive relationship between ratings of potential by student teachers and cooperating teachers and having a position that meets expectations for empowerment also existed.

It appeared that commitment to the profession and feelings of efficacy were positively related to having a position that more closely met job expectations. At graduation, an expectation of providing service to others was most consistently and positively related to commitment, with expectations for extrinsic rewards negatively related to teaching career satisfaction and teaching as a satisfying career. Expectations for challenge and leadership were highly related to ratings of importance of teaching. At one year following graduation, having a position that meets job

TABLE 4

Correlations of Potential, Commitment, and Efficacy With Satisfaction at Graduation and as a First Year Teacher

	Student Teaching														
	Location	Coop Teacher	University Supervisor	Job	Community	Evaluation	Relationships With Other Teachers	Level of Job Performance	Support for Choice of Career	Amount of Time Spent Working	Role Played in Professional Associations	Teaching as a Career	Overall Job Satisfaction -- First Year	Be a Teacher Again -- Graduation	Be a Teacher Again -- First Year
Potential -- Student Teacher	-.00	.14	.19*	.13	.15	.01	.16	.25**	.06	-.12	.04	-.02	.14	.06	.16
Potential -- Cooperating Teacher	.19*	.31**	.29**	.14	-.01	.14	.01	.14	-.10	-.01	-.13	.13	.11	.07	.09
Potential -- University Supervisor	.21*	.23**	.36**	.10	.11	.10	-.07	.15	-.02	.00	-.01	.10	.01	.06	.01
Self-Rating of Potential	.01	.08	.05	.08	-.03	.11	.07	.28**	-.08	-.04	-.00	.05	.01	.14	.08
Teaching Career Satisfaction	.17*	.33**	.32**	.29**	.24**	.14	-.01	.20*	.17*	.25**	.12	.40**	.37**	.40**	.37**
Teaching as a Satisfying Career	.13	-.00	.03	.35**	.40**	.24*	-.00	.46**	.22*	.28**	-.03	.67**	.56**	.25**	.65**
Importance of Teaching	.10	.03	.21*	.28**	.40**	.19*	.04	.46**	.31**	.25*	-.05	.69**	.49**	.35**	.68**
Teachers Make a Difference	.01	.03	.02	-.06	.19*	.09	.10	.13	.00	.33**	.04	.18*	-.00	-.18*	.00
I Make a Difference	.01	.03	.16	.18	.20*	.13	.12	.08	.23*	.27**	.04	.25**	.28**	-.07	.07

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

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TABLE 5
Correlations of Potential, Commitment, and Efficacy With Academic Indicators

	Grade Point Average at Graduation	Grade Point Average at Admission	High School Rank	ACT Score
Potential -- Student teacher	.28**	.19*	.06	-.13
Potential -- Cooperating Teacher	.34**	.21*	.08	.08
Potential -- University Supervisor	.42**	.29**	.26**	.23*
Self-Rating of Potential	.22**	.13	.17*	-.07
Teaching Career Satisfaction	-.13	-.21**	-.14	-.24**
Teaching as a Satisfying Career	.03	-.03	-.01	-.11
Importance of Teaching	-.04	-.08	-.11	-.25*
Teachers Make a Difference	.02	.00	-.08	-.30**
I Make a Difference	.05	.03	.03	-.23*

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

expectations was highly related to 10 of 12 measures of commitment. That individual teachers can make a difference was positively related to all indicators of career orientation at one year following graduation and three of four indicators measured at graduation.

Summary

These results offer insights into understanding more about factors that relate to success as a beginning teacher and to commitment to the profession. Consistent with literature cited, potential for teaching success as rated by the student (at two times), cooperating teacher, and university supervisor was positively related to performance in the classroom, career orientation, and satisfaction with the student teaching experience. These multiple ratings of

TABLE 6
Correlations of Potential, Commitment, and Efficacy With Variables Related to Preparation

	Planning and Delivering Instruction -- First Year	Interpersonal Relationships/ Individual Differences -- First Year	Assessing and Dealing w/ Learning Problems -- First Year	Testing and Evaluating Students -- First Year	Developing a Teaching Style -- First Year	Rating of Program Quality -- Graduation	Rating of Program Quality -- First Year
Potential -- Student Teacher	.03	-.13	-.08	-.17*	-.14	-.05	.10
Potential -- Cooperating Teacher	.01	-.07	-.19*	.01	-.03	.08	-.01
Potential -- University Supervisor	.19*	.17*	.12	.16	.11	.12	.20*
Self-Rating of Potential	-.01	-.15*	-.22**	-.22**	-.12	.07	-.01
Teaching Career Satisfaction	.16*	.12	.24**	.02	.23**	.29**	.15
Teaching as a Satisfying Career	.04	.00	-.01	-.08	-.00	.14	.08
Importance of Teaching	.34**	.13	.08	.08	.27**	.36**	.33**
Teachers Make a Difference	.15	-.05	.04	.14	.18*	.21*	.18*
I Make a Difference	.16	.08	-.01	.02	.10	.14	.15

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

TABLE 7
Correlations of Potential, Commitment, and Efficacy with Career Orientation Variables

	Graduation				First Year			
	Challenge/ Leadership	Extrinsic Rewards	Empowerment	Humanity/ Service	Challenge/ Leadership	Extrinsic Rewards	Empowerment	Humanity/ Service
Potential -- Student Teacher	.12	.07	.10	.04	.12	.09	.20*	.09
Potential -- Cooperating Teacher	.20*	.05	.24**	.19*	.06	-.10	.26**	-.00
Potential -- University Supervisor	.24**	.00	.19*	.25**	.23*	-.04	.07	.05
Self-Rating of Potential	.29**	.17*	.25**	.20*	.11	.12	.10	.03
Teaching Career Satisfaction	.18*	-.18*	.04	.36**	.17*	.16*	.32**	.10
Teaching as a Satisfying Career	.16	-.32**	.01	.19*	.39**	.23*	.38**	.30**
Importance of Teaching	.35**	-.04	-.01	.35**	.40**	.18	.22*	.33**
Teachers Make a Difference	.26**	.09	.17	.14	.16	-.02	.07	-.00
I Make a Difference	.26*	.24*	.02	.31**	.30**	.23*	.30**	.29**

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

potential were also highly intercorrelated and were related to the three measures of commitment. In contrast, the analysis did not reveal a strong relationship between preparation and potential.

As expected, the relationship between academic indicators and potential was not clear; college grades were significantly related to potential, but neither direction nor significance was consistent when the relationships between potential and high school rank and potential and ACT were examined. There are two plausible explanations for this inconsistency. First, not all respondents supplied high school rank and ACT information, reducing the number of cases for those analyses; these data are not required of transfer students for admission into the university. Second, many will argue that the ACT measures ability, while grades measure additional factors.

The ratings of potential indicated that the three groups may use somewhat different criteria in judging potential in future teachers. For all three groups, the relationships between potential and classroom performance, satisfaction, and career orientation seemed to follow similar patterns. However, with respect to preparation program factors and academic ability, the three groups differed. The relationship of potential as rated by university supervisors and preparation was positive for all measures, with higher ratings of adequacy of preparation in planning and delivering instruction and in interpersonal relationships and individual differences being significantly related to higher potential. For the student teachers and the cooperating teachers, only two correlations were significant at the .05 level and most (7 of 10) were negatively correlated. The university supervisors tended to give higher ratings of potential to those students with higher academic ability. Only grades seemed to be consistently correlated with potential as rated by the student teachers and cooperating teachers.

University supervisors appeared to have based their ratings of potential more heavily on these two criteria of grades and preparation factors than did the student teachers and cooperating teachers who may be using a more holistic approach. The university supervisors have a limited number of contacts with student teachers throughout the semester of student teaching, but through direct contact with them in coursework or advising, may have formed an opinion of their potential. On the other hand, the student teacher participates in and is seen by the cooperating teacher in a wider range of daily experiences throughout student teaching. A need for these direct key experiences in the classroom and that student teaching offers a good opportunity to strengthen teaching and interpersonal skills may help to explain the negative correlations reported for the student teachers and cooperating teachers. Student teachers consistently have reported over the last eleven years of this study that more experience in the classroom and more training in areas related to discipline, lesson planning and organization, and working with parents, other teachers, and children with learning problems would be beneficial. Because of the day-to-day interactions with students in the elementary and secondary schools, student teachers and cooperating teachers are placing more emphasis on the applications and use of preparation principles in actual teaching situations, while at the same time, recognizing potential. Increased involvement of university supervisors in student teaching is key in that they often have additional knowledge about the student, including information about academic ability and preparation. Additional time spent in the classroom with the student teacher could enable them to make more accurate judgments of potential and offer insights for improving performance of student teachers in general, as well as provide more information back to the preparation program for program improvement.

For these 126 respondents as first-year teachers, commitment to teaching as a professional career and efficacy appear to be highly related to confidence in abilities, as well as to satisfaction. Confidence in abilities at graduation was shown in significant and positive relationships to commitment through high ratings of performance as student teachers, and at one year following graduation, through high ratings of adequate preparation in the basics of teaching, having developed a teaching style, and feeling that the program had provided quality preparation overall. These teachers feeling that they could make a difference was also highly related to level of performance at both student teaching and as a first-year teacher. They indicated a strong commitment to teaching as a professional career when they were satisfied with the teaching position itself, teaching in general as a career, their level of performance and the evaluation of that performance, the amount of time spent working, and support from the community for education. An additional similar list of satisfactions noted by these teachers was related to efficacy. Not surprisingly, they were also more committed and felt they could make a difference when their personal expectations for a job were met.

All of these findings have implications for placement of teacher preparation program graduates. Assistance with placement of new teachers is critical to help them more closely match their career expectations with the right teaching position. Providing support and encouragement through university-based programs for beginning teachers may also enhance commitment to the profession.

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